

Appln No. 10/588,579
Amdt date October 1, 2008
Reply to Office action of September 30, 2008

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include changes to Figs. 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6. These sheets, which include Figs. 1-6, replace the original sheets including Figs. 1-6.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets

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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 2-17 are pending of which claims 2 and 10 are independent. Claims 2-17 are now amended. Claim 1 is now canceled.

Applicants respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of claims 2-17.

I. Objections to the Specification

The terminology in the specification has been amended in manner that is believed to follow common practice in the art to which the invention pertains. In particular, signals referred to as non-inverting are named with plus sign (e.g., D+) and signals referred to as inverting are named with minus sign (e.g., D-).

II. Objections to the Drawings

The Office action objected to the drawings because claimed elements did not correspond to elements in the figures. The drawings have been amended to provide consistent nomenclature in the drawing, specification, and claims. The current drawings are believed to be in proper form.

III. Claims Objected to for Informalities

Claims 1 and 10 where objected to in the Office action for informalities. The correction requested was not made to claim 1 because it is now cancelled. The requested change was included in the amendments to claim 10. The current claims are believed to be in proper form.

IV. Claims Objected to as Being Dependent Upon a Rejected Base Claim

The Examiner found claims 10-17 allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitation of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 10 previously depended from claim 1. Claim 10 is now written in independent form and includes the limitations of prior claim 1. The claim is also amended to better set forth the subject matter being claimed and, in particular, to remove previous unusual terminology regarding inverting and non-inverting signals. Therefore, Applicants request that the objection to claim 10 be withdrawn and that this claim be allowed.

Claims 11-17 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 10, and each incorporates all the terms and limitations of claim 10 in addition to other limitations that further patentably distinguish them over the cited references. As with claim 10, each of claims 11-17 was amended to better set forth the subject matter being claimed and, in particular, to use more conventional wording. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 11-17 be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

V. Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as his invention, in particular for “the second resistor means” having insufficient antecedent basis.

Claim 7 now recites, “The latch circuit as claimed in claim 6, wherein the second resistor is coupled to a third current source.” Claim 6 as amended recites, “The latch circuit as claimed in claim 5, wherein the output is coupled to the supply voltage via a second resistor.” Claim 7 as amended is believed to be definite. Therefore, Applicants request that the § 112 rejection of claim 7 be withdrawn.

VI. Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 2 was rejected as allegedly being anticipated by Kubota (U.S. Patent No. 4,841,168).

Claim 2 previously depended from claim 1. Claim 2 is now written in independent form. The claim is also amended to better set forth the subject matter being claimed and, in particular, to remove previous unusual terminology referencing inverting and non-inverting signals. The amendments to the claim additionally recite connections between the transistors and the inverting input signal, the non-inverting output signal, and the inverting output signal.

The Office action points to Kubota’s figure 8 in its rejection of prior claim 2. Although the latch circuit of Kubota’s figure 8 bears some similarity to the latch circuit claimed in claim 2, there are patentable distinctions. For example, Kubota does not appear to show, even assuming *arguendo* the interchangeability of bipolar junction transistors and MOS transistors, any transistor with both its gate connected to an input signal and its drain connected to an output

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signal. Thus, Kubota does not teach or suggest “a first transistor having its drain coupled to the non-inverting output signal and its gate coupled to the inverting output signal; a second transistor having its drain coupled to the non-inverting output signal, its gate coupled to the non-inverting clock signal, and its source coupled to the source of the first transistor,” as recited in amended claim 2. Likewise, Kubota does not appear to show “a fifth transistor having its drain coupled to the non-inverting output signal, its gate coupled to the inverting input signal, and its source coupled to the source of the fourth transistor; and a sixth transistor having its drain coupled to the non-inverting output signal, its gate coupled to the inverting clock signal and its source coupled to the source of the fourth transistor,” as recited in amended claim 2. Further, there is no apparent reason why one skilled in the art would have modified the teaching of Kubota at the time when the invention was made to arrive at the claimed invention. Therefore, Applicants request that the rejection of claim 2 be withdrawn and that this claim be allowed.

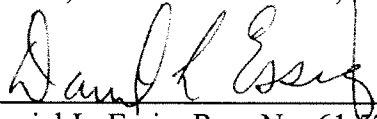
Claims 3-9 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 2, and each incorporates all the terms and limitations of claim 2 in addition to other limitations that further patentably distinguish them over the cited reference. Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 3-9 be withdrawn and that these claims be allowed.

VII. Concluding Remarks

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants earnestly solicit an early issuance of a Notice of Allowance with claims 2-17. If there are any remaining issues that can be resolved over the telephone, the Examiner is cordially invited to call Applicants’ attorney at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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